



Educating, Engaging and Mobilizing Parents to Take Action on Issues that Matter Most To Them...

Testimony before Appropriations Committee
**House Bill No. 5044 AN ACT MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO STATE
EXPENDITURES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2017**

Testimony by Marilyn Calderón, Executive Director
Connecticut Parent Power
Friday, February 19, 2016

Good evening Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee.

I am Marilyn Calderón, Executive Director of Connecticut Parent Power a statewide parent-led organization that engages, educates and mobilizes diverse parents from across the state to act on issues that matter most to them improving outcomes for all children in areas of early childhood, care, education, health care reform and K-12 school systems.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the following commissions, however do oppose, any reduction in funding to the commissions outlined below that the Governor's Budget is proposing:

Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission (LPRAC)

African American Affairs Commission (AAAC)

Asian Pacific American Commission (APAC)

Commission on Children (COC)

As each has functioned with such integrity to ensure that all voices of our melting pot state are heard at the local and statewide level, as each of them has accomplished the following collectively to date by:

- Reviewing and commenting on any proposed state legislation and regulations that would affect the aforementioned diverse populations in the state, especially parents and their children;
- Advising and providing information to the Governor on the state's policies concerning diverse/multicultural communities;
- Advising the Governor concerning the coordination and administration of state programs serving the diverse/multicultural population;
- Maintaining a liaison between diverse/multicultural communities and governmental entities;
- Encouraging and reaching out to diverse representation at all levels of state government, including state boards and commissions;
- Securing appropriate recognition of the accomplishments and contributions of the diverse population of the state; and
- Preparing and submitting to the Governor an annual report concerning its activities with any appropriate recommendations concerning the diverse populations in our state.



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Connecticut Parent Power would like to take a moment to commend the appropriations committee for their shared vision in passing legislative laws that promote the wellness of all diverse children and their families to be able to access effective and efficient commissions that advocate for the health and rights of our state's most vulnerable and vibrant multi-cultural populations through commissions that really do matter to its contributing citizens.

For the past four in half years, Connecticut Parent Power, alongside statewide partners and most importantly parents have worked together to produce a more equitable plan for all families to thrive to higher limits, alongside their most precious gifts, their children to equalize the playing field for all to collectively share a vision that significantly contributes to the growth and statewide successes of having two, three and four generational families lifting up their voices to ensure that our Connecticut state thrives with its grassroots supporters making our communities means to an end more united!

As you know, there is significant two-generation (multi-generation) work that has just begun in our state establishing a key wrap around model of success for all parents, their children and families across our communities. We are at present being admired and watched by other surrounding states at a national level as they learn and grow from our bold extensive efforts in building our collective impact strategies to the core of our diversified and unified multi-pronged families that depend on timely information sharing to make informed decisions that are relevant to their individual and community needs that fosters the whole family/friend/neighbor to reach optimal levels of success.

Our collaborative work with all the commissions in establishing the Office of Early Childhood a few years back, was only the first step to streamlining costs to building a one point of entry for our diverse parents to begin navigating our system with ease that is more family centered/friendly. Therefore, sustaining such effective individualized commissions is essential as we know diverse parents and constituents need timely information on what is happening in their culturally rich communities, as they continue raising young children to promote a greater cultural sense of self and community richness in feeling pride on sustaining their cultural roots that lift more similarities than differences to promote an equitable and thriving state for all!

CT Parent Power is so very proud to continue its work with such reputable commissions that are doing the right thing for our diverse children, parents, families and constituents (i.e., Latino, Asian, Black, etc.) of our state to make timely contributions that add value to the collective impact that each of us contributes to at the grassroots level, locally and statewide for all of our children to grow up becoming loving, nurturing, healthy, social and emotionally productive and contributing citizens in years to come, as our founding fathers have...



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Our commissions have proven to be significantly effective and supportive by working more intentionally together and being the guide of reason for and with our people and state government based on what is really happening in our communities with our Latino, Asian, African American, etc. populations to have a voice and gain more knowledge on what really affects various people from multicultural walks of life to gain the tools necessary to overcome adversity and discrimination of any kind by becoming involved with a commission that understands and is willing to learn more to promote the health and wellness of all through shared information, planning and actionable steps for all to succeed...

We know, that all of you whom represent our statewide culturally responsive voices on the Appropriations team care about the importance of preserving our multi-cultural value at all levels of government to be able to make sound decisions that in deed cultivate the best end result for all...and we hope that you can preserve the full funding for each commission, as our minority populations are now that majority in our state and we need to ensure that we are able to respond to the vast needs with love, respect, patience, integrity and timely turn around periods that co-create systems changes that work for all parents, children, families and constituents that may look and act differently in our melting pot state, but deserve to be embraced at every level to ensure that they collectively foster his brother/sisters keepers in their own communities statewide.

We know that it all begins with the power of one to make the bold move and decisions in passing budgets that never compromise the return on investment in the long run on the backs of our most vulnerable minority families that deserve to have commissions that work for and with the diverse people who in turn make our state, GREAT!

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you in full support of fully funding our exemplary commissions, as in the past, to ensure that no family is ever left behind....